

CHAPTER ONE

THE GENIUS OF MAP

I'm passionate about MAP.

I'm passionate about business.

And I'm passionate about helping people change and grow.

What I do, almost every single working day, is show people how to use the MAP system to transform their businesses and their lives. Use the MAP system and its Vital Factor tools, I tell them, and you can set into motion powerful changes that will dramatically improve every aspect of your business. Every single one. And guess what? You can then take these same tools home and use them to improve your relationships, your finances, your parenting, your retirement planning, even how you manage your weight, cholesterol, and stress. And if you share these tools with your kids, it will help them perform better at school and do better at sports, music, or art. In sum, it will help them achieve their goals in any field they choose.

At the outset I always hear skeptics. "Come on now, Lee," they say, "you're the CEO of MAP. You're just blowing smoke! MAP can't do all that!"

Well, I'm here to tell you it can. And MAP has the track record to prove it. MAP stands for Management Action Programs, and for forty-six years MAP has been transforming businesses—and lives. The MAP system is amazingly flexible. It works well inside big, brand-name corporations like Wells Fargo & Company, Marriott Hotels, SBC Communications, Trader Joe's, Cold Stone Creamery, Stewart Title, and Countrywide Credit. It also works well inside small businesses, creative start-ups, and nonprofit organizations, even city governments. Today the MAP system helps run construction companies,

engineering firms, advertising agencies, restaurant chains, doctors' offices, fruit farms, and high-tech companies specializing in everything from biotechnology to computer gaming. MAP takes start-up companies and helps them grow, and it takes mature companies and helps them improve their performance. That's what my colleagues and I do, day in, day out, and at MAP we love every minute of our work.

Do you know why we are so passionate about what we do? It is because every day we get to work side by side with so many dynamic and fascinating business leaders. You'll meet many of them: Debra Paterson, Bill de la Viña, Michael Caito, Katherine Le, Ted Price, Christi Wilkins, Ray Thurston, and many more. These are men and women of extraordinary intelligence and accomplishment, coming from a rich array of backgrounds, and we feel privileged to guide them along the road to business success. But it goes much deeper than that. We are helping them grow as individuals, and we are helping them fulfill their highest goals and ambitions. Every day at MAP we feel blessed, for we have front-row seats at the American Dream.

The purpose of this book is simple and clear: we are going to show you, step by step, how you can use the MAP system to transform your own business and your own life. We are going to show you how to set goals and meet them every single time. The secret is an ingenious MAP concept called Vital Factors, and we're going to show you how you can use the Vital Factor process to dramatically improve your company's performance and profitability. We will also give you a set of simple, easy-to-implement Vital Factor tools that will help you and your team understand and master the execution of the six basic functions of management:

- Leading
- Communicating
- Planning
- Organizing
- Staffing
- Controlling

Everything begins with effective leadership, and we are going to share with you some very surprising ideas about what it takes to

be an effective leader and motivator. As you will discover, the MAP ideas don't come out of any fancy MBA study or trendy new management fad. They come directly from decades of hands-on, real-world, in-the-trenches business experience. And here's the real beauty of it: the Vital Factor process itself helps organizations groom effective managers and leaders. In the pages ahead, dozens of men and women will tell you in detail how they have grown and matured as managers and leaders, just by learning the MAP system and implementing it throughout their companies and organizations.

Now, let's get right down to the marrow of it: What is the MAP system? How did it get started? How does it work? How, specifically, can the MAP system help you transform your business and your life? And how can MAP help you fulfill your highest dreams and ambitions?

The answers all trace back to a man named Eric Gillberg. I want to take a moment or two to tell you about Eric. He's a brilliant, inventive, no-nonsense man, and as you will see, MAP is his baby, his brainchild, the crowning achievement of his remarkable life. Hearing about Eric will help you understand the MAP system and how unique it is in its approach to management and leadership. Also, I want you to see what kind of life experiences shaped Eric's vision and what specific goals and values led him to the creation of MAP. Then everything will begin to fall into place, and you will better understand how the MAP system can work for you.

Eric Gillberg was born in Detroit some ninety years ago, near the end of World War I. His father was an immigrant from Sweden; his mother came from a family in Ohio. Eric's early life was not easy. His parents divorced when he was a young boy, and they sent him off to a boarding school in Kalamazoo. Later he returned to Detroit to live with his mother. Early on Eric realized that he had to fend for himself and be practical and self-reliant. At the same time, though, he saw that to succeed in life you have to learn how to live and work harmoniously with other people and how to serve their needs as well as your own.

During the terrible Depression years, Eric juggled school and several different jobs. First, he worked in the stockroom of the Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit. Then he went to work as a trouble-shooter for Briggs Manufacturing, a company that was manufacturing wings for fighter aircraft. Though he was still very young,

Eric was given a big responsibility at Briggs: quality control. He had to make sure that every step in the production process was running perfectly and that every wing emerged without a single flaw. This was a critical, high-stakes mission: even a tiny mistake in manufacturing could result in the pilot and many other people losing their lives.

At Briggs, Eric showed that he had the makings of a first-class engineer: his mind was disciplined and precise but also supple and creative. Still, Eric wasn't yet sure what path he wanted to follow. When he entered Wayne University in Detroit, he started out with coursework in English and psychology. Then came Pearl Harbor and World War II. Right away Eric quit school and joined the U.S. Navy. It was in the Navy that Eric discovered he had a special gift: he was a born trainer and coach. Soon he was training top Navy pilots and getting them ready for combat. One of his toughest assignments was the *Dumpster*. In this exercise, pilots were dumped into frigid water, and in the water Eric taught them the skills to survive. Again, there was no margin for error: one mistake on a combat mission and the pilot could die.

When the war ended, Eric left the Navy and went into business. He bought a small franchise in California and quickly turned it into a moneymaker. Then Eric got a dream call. A man who knew of his special gifts and experience asked him to develop a series of innovative training programs to teach companies the secrets of leadership, management, and business success. Eric jumped at the opportunity. It was a perfect fit: it combined his passion for business with his natural gifts as a trainer. Right away Eric knew this was his true calling, what he was born to do.

Throughout the next several years Eric ran management training programs for AT&T and other highly successful companies. He groomed their leadership teams, drilling them on management fundamentals, and he worked hand in glove with men and women up and down their organizations. Eric learned that promoting lasting change was always a process, never a single event. You had to work with companies over the long haul, to mentor their people and guide the process every step of the way. Along with corporate giants like AT&T, Eric worked with many smaller businesses and creative start-ups, digging into their internal workings, pinpointing problems, and teaching their people how to solve them. In

companies small and large Eric found that grooming top business leaders was like grooming Top Gun pilots for the Navy: you had to start out with people with the Right Stuff, give them first-class training, and every so often you had to throw them into some business equivalent of the Dumpster, so they could learn how to survive and manage a crisis—and feel their skills and confidence grow in the process.

By 1960, Eric was ready to go out on his own. He left the training program group and created his own business training and consulting company, with headquarters in Pasadena, California. As in any start-up venture, Eric's first concern was survival: bringing in enough business to pay the rent and his skeleton staff. Quickly, though, Eric developed strong relationships with leading engineering and construction firms in the LA area and with a top airline manufacturer. These industries were a good fit for Eric's expertise: he knew their challenges intimately, from his years in the Navy and from his early days inspecting airplane wings for Briggs Manufacturing.

In the early stages Eric's seminars focused on helping leaders and managers sharpen their interpersonal skills and their ability to communicate. That was a good start, but Eric wanted to innovate, he wanted to develop new ways to help his clients improve their production lines and their bottom-line business performance. To do that, he put together a team of highly experienced business executives and coaches. The team members were not academics or theoreticians. They were passionate, committed business professionals with long experience in the trenches of business. They knew how to run companies, recruit the best people, meet budgets, control costs, promote growth and profitability, and nurture creativity and innovation. By any standard this was an "A team," and it was also the foundation of MAP. Eric, now, was ready to go.

Once he had his team in place, Eric gave its members a very specific task. Many of Eric's early clients were project driven: they had to design and develop a product by a specific date, on a fixed budget, and then they had to manufacture it, inspect it, test it, and deliver it—on time, on budget, and with zero mistakes. Eric knew they needed a system to do that, a system of management that could set goals, fix budgets and deadlines, control quality, ensure accountability, and instill the discipline necessary to meet all the

project's goals on time and on budget. What would such a system look like? And how would it work?

To answer those questions, Eric and his team studied the thinking and the management practices of several highly successful companies. More precisely, they drew together what they already knew from their own wealth of experience. What they saw was remarkably clear. Highly successful companies have the basic components that you would expect: strong financial foundations and the usual sturdy pillars: Effective leaders. Competent managers. A motivated staff. Clear plans and strategies. Concrete goals. Quality control. Attractive, reliable goods or services. And solid financial management. No surprises there.

But Eric's team found something else: these highly successful companies had not unearthed any magic formulas for success. To the contrary, they simply focused tightly on their business fundamentals, not only mastering them but also weaving them deeply into their daily operations. They did the big things well and they did the little things well. Day in, day out. Year in, year out.

The results were plain to see. The best-run companies, no matter what their field of endeavor, usually displayed a common set of attributes and virtues:

- Their business goals were clear, specific, and measurable.
- Their supporting values were clear, written down—and unbendable.
- Internal communication was clear, up and down the company.
- There was alignment: everyone understood and supported the company's mission, vision, values, and strategic objectives.
- Roles were clear: everyone had a written job description, with precisely defined duties and responsibilities.
- Individual goals were clear: each person had specific goals to meet, including measurable benchmarks for evaluating performance.
- There were controls: everyone's performance was measured and evaluated on a consistent basis—managers and executives included.
- There were incentives: people who consistently met their goals were properly rewarded and groomed for greater responsibility.

- There were consequences: people who consistently failed to meet their goals were given training, a different assignment, or if all else failed, they were given an honest appraisal and asked to leave.
- There was candor: it served no one's purposes to hide the truth or shy away from confrontation. In matters small and large, people in highly successful companies worked hard to uphold the highest standards of openness, honesty, and fairness.
- And their No. 1 priority, always? People. The best-run companies understood, deep in their marrow, that their most important resource was not new technology, clever marketing, canny pricing strategies, or astute financial planning. No. Their most important resource, what made them winners, was people. First and always and never any confusion about it.
- Training and personal growth, therefore, were bedrock essentials. To succeed in business you had to recruit and hire the best people, train them, keep them motivated and challenged, give them the tools and incentives they needed to succeed, and do everything in your power to help them grow as individuals, managers, and leaders.

These findings ignited Eric and his team. These attributes and virtues, when set down in an orderly fashion, suggested to them a formula, a blueprint for success, a set of ideals and practices that could lead any company or organization to growth and prosperity. And to that blueprint Eric and his team then added something else, an insight that shed light deep into the crevices of what separates the top companies—the innovators and the market leaders—from all the others.

The team found that companies were like people: each was unique, each had its own distinctive DNA, each had its own particular set of defining strengths and weaknesses. Moreover, each company had its own unique—but often hidden—set of *Vital Factors*, the critical elements that would either hold that company back or propel it to success. This concept of Vital Factors did not spring forth in one Eureka! moment; it took months of sifting and analyzing. But the more deeply Eric and his team looked at Vital Factors, the more convinced they became that they had found their grail, the keys to the castle, the tickets to success.

What exactly is a Vital Factor? The realms of medicine and sport offer the clearest analogies. If you have a heart attack and wind up in the hospital, every day your doctor and nurses will monitor your vital signs: your temperature, pulse, blood pressure, and the like. By carefully measuring and monitoring these Vital Factors, your medical team can evaluate your progress, address root causes, and develop a concrete plan to put you on the road back to improved health and vitality.

Likewise, winning sports teams and athletes routinely break their performance down into its critical component parts, to examine each part and see which is working well and which is not. In baseball, for instance, you can learn a lot by looking at a pitcher's win-loss record for the season. But you can learn a lot more by measuring his pitch speed, calculating the ratio of strikes to balls pitched, and pinpointing how many pitches he can throw before his arm starts to tire. Each of these is a Vital Factor, a component that can be isolated, measured, worked on, and improved.

A first-class pitching coach, though, digs much deeper. What small steps influence these Vital Factors? To find out, he and the pitcher sit down together and examine every aspect of the pitcher's fundamentals. His preparation. His grip on the ball. His focus on the catcher's target. The position of his feet. The alignment of his shoulders to the target. His windup. His delivery. The height of his leg kick. The angle of his arm as it comes overhead. The speed at which his arm flings forward. How each finger works at the point of release. Each of these components is a deeper fundamental, and each one ultimately affects the pitcher's win-loss record, his personal bottom line. So a pitcher needs to master all his Vital Factors. Working with their coach, the best pitchers focus tightly on their most critical Vital Factors—at MAP we always say, "Focus on the Vital Few; ignore or delegate the trivial many"—and then they drill each one to perfection, until their minds and their bodies naturally and consistently execute each one. When a pitcher masters all his Vital Factors and then blends them into a seamless and efficient pitching system, he will become a consistent winner and maybe one of the very best in his league. Mastering these Vital Factors is the key to success, the ticket to glory.

Eric's team saw it clearly: Vital Factors play the same role in every business—including *your* business. To succeed, you have to study the

mechanics of your business, you have to pinpoint the critical component parts, the hidden business drivers, and then you have to devise ways to focus constantly on your Vital Factors: measure them, manage them, improve them, and ultimately perfect them. Moreover, businesses, like baseball teams, need first-class coaches and an effective *system* for teaching and mastering the Vital Factor process. Eric's team recognized that Vital Factors would vary from industry to industry, from company to company, from department to department, even from job to job. For a delivery company one Vital Factor might be profit per delivery. For a winery one Vital Factor might be bottle yield per acre of grapes planted. For a mail-order company one Vital Factor might be the time the call center takes to answer the phone, take the order, and process the customer's credit card. But Eric's team also came to this stark realization:

Whatever your specific Vital Factors are, if you want to win consistently in your business, you have to pinpoint your Vital Factors, measure them consistently, and focus tightly on your Vital Few. Then you have to put into place a system that will help you master your Vital Factors, hone them, polish them, and finally perfect them. Mastering the Vital Factor process is the art of execution. And doing it better than your competitors, day in, day out, is your path to success, your ticket to glory.

For Eric and his team, seeing all this was illuminating—and sobering. In their view there was no escaping the truth: the best-run companies truly were in a class by themselves. They had mastered their fundamentals and had woven them tightly into the operations of their companies. And they had learned how to master the Vital Factor process. That was the good news. But here was the bad news: many, many companies, even ones that were doing well, had not mastered their business fundamentals. Many had not mastered even the basics of effective execution. And here was the worst news of all: as Eric and his team could see, few managers or business leaders understood the concept of Vital Factors, much less how to identify their own Vital Factors, focus on them, and manage them effectively. Put simply, most managers and leaders had no effective system of management and no blueprint for success.

What to do?

This is where the true genius of Eric and his team came shining through. What if they could create a complete management

system and a set of tools that any business could use to pinpoint its Vital Factors and ensure their proper management and execution? And what if that same system could do even more? What if it could actually perform six critical missions simultaneously:

- *Teach* business fundamentals
- *Pinpoint* a company's Vital Factors
- *Ensure* proper measurement and management of these Vital Factors
- *Establish* a top-to-bottom system of goals and controls
- *Catalyze* positive, ongoing changes throughout the company
- *Instill* those virtues that turn good companies into market leaders

What an idea! A system like that could transform almost any business or organization. It could improve the performance of small, family-run businesses and also big corporations. It could put a strong business foundation under creative start-ups, and it could revitalize old-guard companies that were losing energy and market share. At a stroke it could solve endemic business problems and simplify most of the complexities of management. What a wonder tool that would be!

And so it was that the MAP system was born. MAP, as I said before, stands for Management Action Programs, and that perfectly describes what the MAP system is. It is a detailed, comprehensive plan of action, one designed to perform the six critical missions that I listed earlier. MAP is also a blueprint and an operations manual. It shows companies precisely how to run their businesses, day in, day out, for optimum performance and profit. The system also includes a set of effective, easy-to-use tools that any company or organization can use to solve problems and get almost any job done, on time and on budget. And the foundation of the MAP system? Vital Factors and business fundamentals, the daily blocking and tackling that winning companies do better than their competitors. MAP is an ongoing process that, when implemented well, produces all those attributes and virtues that Eric's team found in the best-run companies. The process produces compelling mission statements, clear, unbendable values, strong business plans, and well-defined job descriptions and lines of authority,

plus an entire system of goals and controls and incentives and rewards. Eric and his team precision-engineered the MAP system to accomplish all these goals. And over the past forty-six years, it has done just that, often brilliantly so.

Being so big in scope the MAP system did not have an easy birth. Today Eric lives in quiet retirement in Washington State, with his beloved wife, Alice, but he still has vivid memories of the birth of the MAP system. He and his original team assembled the system piece by piece, and then they went through long, often frustrating phases of development, field-testing, refinement, and polish. At the outset Eric never dreamed that his little baby would grow so big or that it would wind up helping more than 12,000 companies. Eric's first goal was modest and nothing fancy: he simply wanted to create an effective, easy-to-implement system of management that his clients could use to manage their projects and meet their goals on a consistent basis. No muss, no frills, just get the job done.

Nonetheless, the MAP system quickly proved to be an ingenious tool. It functions like the operating system inside your computer or your car: you install it inside your company, and it makes the engine and all the vital parts run smoothly and efficiently. The MAP system is a model of simplicity, yet it produces changes that are deep, powerful, and lasting. MAP can take any company, organization, or team—any entity that needs to be managed—and make it perform better. You will see proof of that all the way through this book.

One cornerstone of our philosophy at MAP is this core belief: if you want to grow your business, you have to start by growing the people who run it. To that end Eric and his team developed a series of three-day workshops and follow-up sessions to teach people how to manage their Vital Factors, execute their fundamentals, and grow as managers and leaders and reach their full potential. Again, it took time, experimentation, and field-testing, but the resulting formula proved to be highly successful. Over the past forty-six years, more than 150,000 men and women have used the MAP workshop to improve their leadership and managerial skills and enhance their careers. They emerged from the workshops better equipped to manage their companies and better equipped to train the people around them and help them grow as managers and leaders. Typically, managers and leaders who participate in MAP

workshops then send their teams to these workshops, in order to drive the MAP system and its Vital Factor tools all the way through their companies. This sets in motion powerful ongoing changes, as you will see for yourself in the pages ahead.

The workshops are just one step. On top of that foundation the consultants and coaches at MAP also provide on-site support and guidance for client companies, helping them tailor the MAP system to their specific needs. In keeping with Eric's original philosophy, the MAP team does not work like typical business consultants. Our first priority is to build a lasting relationship with our clients. As you will hear, some companies have been working with MAP coaches for fifteen or twenty years. By patiently focusing on the long term we can earn the trust and confidence of everyone in the company, and we often wind up functioning like doctors or trusted family advisers. We meet with our clients on a regular basis, at least once a month, and we help them improve the health of their companies. We also function as *life coaches*, working closely with men and women at every level of a company, helping them meet their personal goals and sharing with them the secrets of success in business—and in life. In times of crisis, of course, our MAP coaches are there to help.

Eric Gillberg and his original team set all this into motion. They pioneered the concept of Vital Factors, they constructed the MAP operating system, and they spent long years field-testing it, fine-tuning it, and adjusting it to suit the changing needs of their clients and the surrounding business environment. It is a testament to what they built that the MAP system and its guiding principles have withstood the test of time. Economies change, industries change, people change, and business fads come and go as capriciously as birds on a telephone wire. But the underlying truths that Eric and his team discovered remain solid and immutable. And they remain just as potent today as they were when Eric started MAP, over forty-six years ago.

MAP TODAY

When Eric started MAP I was just a schoolboy, living with my parents and my brother in Nebraska. We were typical Midwesterners. My folks were warm and caring, and we always laughed a lot

around the family table. My parents were disciplined and hard working, and my brother and I learned from their example. For us, this was bedrock: nothing substantial can be built without hard work. For several generations, none of my family had been to college; there was too much other work to do. I made schooling a top priority, though, and I was determined to get a college education.

Football and other sports were among my early passions. I learned the fundamentals of football in high school and college. Nebraska always had one of the top football teams in the nation. Why? Because year in, year out, we had first-rate coaches and first-rate training that focused on fundamentals. Every day we drilled our fundamentals, the basic blocking and tackling of good football, and the results were plain to see: we did the big things well and we did the little things well. That was our blueprint for success, and we turned in winning seasons year after year.

I was lucky: I learned the importance of fundamentals early on. I remember my father breaking down the fundamentals of the simple process of mowing grass, and I remember my mom taking my brother and me into the kitchen and teaching us the fundamentals of washing dishes. Whether it was from my coaches or my parents it was always, “Lee, start with the fundamentals and learn it from the ground up. And if it’s worth doing, do it right. Give it your all.” Thanks to them and my own hard work, I learned that executing your fundamentals well was essential to success in whatever you chose to do. And for my future career in business, that was the best lesson that money could buy.

Now let me tell you a story. After I graduated from college, I went to work as a teacher in a small town in Nebraska, in a K–12 school with only 144 students. We were too small to field an eleven-man football team, but this was Nebraska and we had to have football. So in our conference we played eight boys to a side, and year after year our team absolutely stank. When I joined the school, the team had won only three games total over the past three seasons. We were just plain bad. Anyway, that summer, before school started, the head football coach came up to me and said, “Hey, Lee, you played football. Could you help out as an assistant coach?”

“Sure,” I said.

“Great, because I sure could use some help. This year I think we can really turn things around.” I then asked the coach if he had

any tapes of games from the previous year. “Sure,” he said. “We film a couple of games each year.”

I took the films home—in those days it was 8 mm film—and I watched them carefully. The following week the coach stopped me in the hall all excited. Then he handed me a playbook that was about a half inch thick. “I’ve added in about fifteen new plays for this season and I’m really excited. These plays are really going to make a difference for us!”

I looked at the playbook and said to him, “You know, that’s great. Really good.” I wanted to be encouraging and supportive. But candor runs deep in the Froschheiser veins, and I said, “So, what you’ve done is you’ve added on fifteen new plays that our guys won’t be able to run very well.”

The coach looked at me with this kind of blank look and said, “What do you mean?”

“Well, you could add a hundred new plays to this playbook and you’re just going to have one hundred more plays that you’re not going to run well. The issue is not how many plays you have in your playbook. The issue is your fundamentals, your blocking and tackling. Our people miss blocks. And they don’t know how to tackle correctly. These are kids who don’t have a lot of experience. Sure, you get them to remember the plays, but they still don’t execute the fundamentals. Football is more than just running plays; the real key is how well your guys execute the fundamentals behind those plays.”

The coach raised his eyebrows. “You know, you’re right, Lee. But I’m not sure we have enough time in practice to address those problems. We do our normal summer training, but I get them into running plays really early, and we work on getting the plays down so they can actually play a game.” The coach paused for a moment and then said, “But I’m willing to try something else. What should we do?”

“I think we should hone our playbook down to about eight or ten plays, a few basic plays that we can run well and execute well. Maybe, after we’ve mastered those, we can add in one or two more.”

And that’s exactly what we did. We spent all of our summer practices focused on execution. How do you tackle? Well, when you go to tackle, you put your face guard right into the middle of that guy’s chest; you don’t just stick your arms out. How do you block?

Well, you square yourself up this way, and you position your feet like that. Now, let's move on to the fundamentals of blocking.

And guess what? The approach worked. We got our guys to a place where they were able to execute eight basic plays really, really well. We trained them so hard they could practically run those eight plays in their sleep. They knew exactly how to step, where to step. When we started the season, our approach quickly became kind of a joke: the other teams knew exactly which play we'd run even before we'd run it. But guess what? It didn't matter! Because we were able to execute those plays successfully. And in the end we had a winning season. We went five and four. This was a major triumph. It was like a town celebration; the school hadn't had a winning season for who knows how many years.

Now, what's the point of this story? On the football field, half a continent away from California, I had learned what Eric Gillberg and his original team had learned about business: you have to focus on your fundamentals, you have to pinpoint your Vital Factors and then focus on the Vital Few, the small number of core plays that you can master and that will carry you to victory. Mastering your Vital Factors is the key to successful execution, the ticket to glory. The problem is that few people realize the importance of the Vital Factors—even people who are in the roles of leaders and coaches!

With these lessons under my belt, I went into business and moved quickly up the ranks of management and into leadership positions. Then I helped run several major companies. As I went, I deepened my understanding of the fundamentals and the finer points of management. Still, I wanted to learn more, and I wanted to share with others everything that I had learned along the way. When MAP signed me on as a business coach, right away I knew this was my calling, what I was born to do.

What makes MAP different? It's that we focus on those six basic functions of management: Leading. Communicating. Planning. Organizing. Staffing. Controlling. Beyond that, we teach people how to master the Vital Factor process and execute their fundamentals. As you will see, for a business leader the MAP system can be a liberation. When you and your team master your business's fundamentals, you have more time at work to innovate and be creative—and

you have more time to be at home with your family and to lead a more balanced life. I have seen it work over and over: the MAP system helps overworked, overstressed executives get their lives back, their fun back, their creativity back—and their spouses and families back too. As you will see over and over, MAP transforms businesses and it transforms lives.

NOW THE BOOK

I salute Eric and his original team. They did a marvelous job. And I know what it took to help 12,000 companies transform their operations, boost their performance, and adopt a whole new concept of leadership. But at MAP today we see that as only a good beginning. The MAP system is unique. As far as we can tell, there is no other business management system like it, and there is certainly none that pairs business management skills with personal growth and transformation. Still, for years MAP has been referred to as “the best-kept secret in business consulting.” We were a quiet success and we were happy to keep it that way.

Now, though, we have decided to take our proprietary system of business management and personal growth and make it available to the general public. We want to share the MAP system and the secrets we have learned with companies and individuals across the United States and far beyond. We want the MAP system to be available to everyone, from a baker in Pennsylvania to a delivery company in Kansas, and from a software designer in Bangalore to every start-up venture from Cambridge to Palo Alto. MAP can work wonders for each of them—and for each of you as well. We know that’s true; we see the proof of it every single day.

This book is MAP’s chosen vehicle. In the early chapters, we will show you how you can use the MAP system and Vital Factors at work and at home. And in the later chapters, we will take you deep inside the MAP process and show you what it can do when implemented over the long term. All along the way we will tell you true stories of men and women who have used MAP to improve their businesses and their lives. Our ongoing message to you is clear and empowering: if they can do it, so can you. This book will show you how.

Clear language and clear communication are essential to the success of any business, and they are absolutely essential to the MAP

process. So no one in this book will be talking in abstractions or jargon-laden theory. Likewise, we will stay focused on practical solutions, what works and what doesn't. Our bedrock will be business fundamentals: Leadership. Mission. Vision. Values. Strategy and the like. But we will also devote whole sections of this book to life planning, the most effective ways to groom your successor, and an essential element of business success that we at MAP feel is too often overlooked: passion and commitment.

Over the years we at MAP have developed a few terms and concepts that we hold dear: *Vital Factors*. The *Vital Few*. *Team Consulting*. *Goals and Controls*. The *Big Red "S."* And one of my favorites: the *Onboard Troublemaker*. As we go along, we'll explain those terms and how you can use them to sharpen your thinking and simplify complex business problems. Once that's done, it's often much easier to work out a solution.

As we present the MAP system and its Vital Factor tools, we will also share with you something much larger: the collective wisdom of the entire MAP team. One day at a meeting of our board of directors we added up our combined years of hands-on business experience. It was over 250 years of experience—and that was just on the board! This book is truly a collaborative effort, drawing together the collective experience and wisdom of our team of MAP consultants and coaches, plus the real-life experiences of dozens of our MAP clients. As you will see, as coaches we form very close bonds with our clients, and the richness of the stories in this book flows directly from those bonds and from the business lessons that we have all learned together. This book is a collaboration in another sense as well. For an outsider's perspective—and for help with the actual writing—we at MAP turned to Paul Chutkow, the author of several acclaimed books about business. We put Paul through the MAP workshop and then sent him out to talk at length with several MAP clients, to see up close and with a journalist's eye how the MAP system worked for a wide range of companies and organizations. It was an illuminating experience: Paul saw things in the MAP system that we, being so close to it, hadn't seen. And when it came to the actual writing of the book, Paul was able to meld his cool, objective outsider perspective with my passionate, committed insider perspective. To make matters simple for the reader, Paul and I narrate the book with a single first-person voice:

mine. Still, I want readers to know that behind my solo-sounding, narrating “I” there stands the experience of the entire MAP team and Paul’s unique perspective as well.

As you will see, the overarching theme of this book is *change*, and that theme will carry us far beyond the confines of business. In the pages ahead you will hear a wide variety of business leaders explain how MAP helped them make far-reaching changes—in their companies, yes, but also in their personal lives. Andy Cohn will tell you how MAP helped him save his marriage. A hard-driving CEO named George Rogers will tell you how MAP helped him become a better parent and a more understanding husband. A Los Angeles advertising executive named Hector Orci will explain how MAP led him to business success and then to a second calling: creating charter schools to help Latino kids grow and reach their full potential.

Where does the MAP process ultimately lead? At the end of this book a Phoenix businessman named Ray Thurston will tell you how MAP helped him turn a small family-run messenger service into a giant of innovation, one coveted by UPS. Ray made a fortune in the process, and now he has moved on to new and exciting missions: protecting endangered species around the world and helping to pioneer a new generation of cures for breast cancer. As Ray will tell you, he is now fulfilling his highest dreams and ambitions, thanks in large measure to what he learned from MAP and to the deep and lasting changes that MAP set into motion.

MAP, as you are about to discover, is a journey of growth and transformation. It begins with a single step, a step that you can now take simply by turning the page. At MAP we refer to this first step as the *awakening*.